

Overview of gender commitments within Outcome Agreements for AY 2018-19

1. In the Outcome Agreement (OA) guidance for AY 2018-19, as in previous years, the SFC asked for institutions to outline their key ambitions to tackle gender imbalances at a subject level within their OAs, as set out within their institutional gender action plans. It specified that there should be clear targets aimed at subjects with the greatest gender imbalances (i.e. greater than 25%/75%), and that universities should also demonstrate how they are addressing the overall underrepresentation of male students at the undergraduate level. They were also asked to identify where there is an imbalance between male and female students in retention/completion by subject, and to outline what outcomes they hope to achieve to address this imbalance.
2. Institutions were also asked to highlight how they were addressing the Public Sector Equality duty to promote gender equality in their staff and governing bodies. This includes reporting on the gender balance at senior academic level, including actions they were taking to address the gender pay gap, and details of how they are working to ensure gender balance on their boards.
3. The following gives an overview of how institutions responded to this guidance within their OAs.

Subject focused outcomes

4. Approximately 85% (16) universities and approximately 88% (14) of colleges identified subject areas with a greater than 75% gender imbalance to be targeted. These subjects were largely in line with those identified by SFC, although notably 4 institutions also identified Physics as a subject which they would be focused on. Other subjects identified included Human Resource Management, Retail and Events, Forensic Science, Chemistry and Biology. Specialised institutions such as SRUC and Royal Conservatoire identified their own subjects of focus, whereas Glasgow School of Art aimed to improve gender balance in all programmes, so that there is not more than a 75/25% split.

Good Practice

5. The University of Glasgow has identified 6 subject areas with the greatest imbalance, with benchmarking data from 2011/12 onwards. These subject areas are aligned with those identified by SFC, with the exception of Physics and Astronomy (which, as discussed above, was a commonly identified additional subject area with a large gender imbalance). Milestones for improvements have then been set up to 2030/31.

Underrepresentation of Male Undergraduates

6. Approximately 51% (10) universities referenced the requirement to address the overall underrepresentation of male students at undergraduate level in their Outcome Agreements. Of these, 5 set their own specific targets to address this imbalance, and 2 committed to achieving SFC's target of not having a greater than 5% gender imbalance in the undergraduate population by 2030. 2 universities had an existing gender imbalance in favour of male students and 1 reported that they were happy with their existing gender balance. Approximately 38% (7) colleges identified gender imbalances in course delivery. Of these, one aimed to increase overall delivery to male learners by 1% per year, and another aimed for gender parity by 2020/21.

Good Practice:

7. The University of Aberdeen aims to reach an overarching gender balance of 45%/55% male/female split for Scottish-domiciled students by 2019/2020- 0.9% improvement from 2016/17.
8. Borders College has a target to increase the proportion of credits delivered to males to 48.9% in 2018/19, and for male parity by 2020/21.

Imbalance in Retention

9. Only 37% (7) of universities and only 4 colleges (24%) acknowledged the requirement to identify and address gender imbalances in retention and completion rates, and none of these identified specific *subject* areas with an imbalance between male and female retention rates.

Gender Balance in Staff

10. Approximately 79% (15) of universities outlined their plans to promote gender equality in staff at a senior level. Of these, 11 (73%) had undertaken pay reviews to work towards eliminating the gender pay gap; although one institution reported that they currently had a gender pay gap in favour of female employees. Approximately 57% of colleges addressed gender equality in senior staff. All of these also included plans for addressing the gender pay gap.

Good Practice

11. The OU has a target in place to increase the proportion of women in senior professorial roles from 27.6% to 40% by 2020.
12. UWS will 'Actively encourage more women to apply for Professorial roles, through promotion of the UWS Family Friendly suite of policies, promotions workshops and professoriate mentoring. 12.5 percentage point increase in

females in senior management roles compared to 2015. A full Equal Pay Review is following good practice guidance from organisations such as ECU and 'Close the Gap'.

Gender Balance on Boards

13. Approximately 90% (17) of universities outlined plans to address gender balance in their boards and courts - the majority of these had a target of 40% female representation, and 2 already had a greater than 40% balance in favour of female members. 65% (11) of colleges describe how they are working towards improving gender balance on their boards; of these, 73% made reference to their ongoing commitment to Scottish Government's Partnership for Change Pledge, which sets a voluntary target of a 50/50 gender balance on boards by 2020. A further 2 colleges reported that they already had a gender balanced board and therefore would not be implementing any new actions.

Good Practice

14. Dundee and Angus College has achieved a 50-50 gender balance on their board, and is working in partnership with *Changing the Chemistry*, a charity which influences organisational governance to introduce broader diversity, to maintain this commitment to gender balance and promote further diversity within their governance.

Next steps

15. SFC's priorities for action are set out in our [progress report](#) for 2018, one of which is to push for clearer and more focused outcomes from all institutions in institutional Outcome Agreements. We will work with the Gender Governance Group to consider how best to address the issues highlighted through this exercise in future Outcome Agreements and in the implementation of the gender action plan.